



February 5, 2015

Testimony on Proposed Bill 5823: AN ACT IMPLEMENTING A STATE-WIDE  
COORDINATED TWO-GENERATION MODEL

Submitted by: Rich Tariff, President, Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education

*The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education, a statewide professional organization representing providers of mandated adult education.*

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee:

My name is Rich Tariff, and I represent CAACE, the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education, whose programs serve about 25,000 adult learners in this state who are seeking to develop their basic academic skills, learn the English language, become US citizens or earn a high school diploma. CAACE has a long and successful experience with two-generation approaches to development in projects that partner with other service agencies to address early childhood and adult education needs while building parenting skills. Currently there are seventeen adult education programs statewide that provide such programs with the help of SDE-administered, federally funded, competitive grants.

Our programs utilize several of the strategies promoted in this bill, such as co-location of adult basic skills instruction with early childhood education at Family Resource Centers or Family Learning Centers. We also partner with employers to provide transportation to our centers or space in the work environment for adult education and worker training. And we will braid funding sources so that school materials for young children and community resources for job information and placement can come together in a location where quality adult education is also provided.

We also want to applaud efforts to extend TANF time limitations for financial support while adults attend training and educational experiences that lead to family self-sufficiency. This added support time is necessary today because jobs that can provide a living wage require a greater amount of education and training than did jobs in the past.

Finally, we want to caution against focusing these two-generation strategies only on large cities or on the "ten towns with the greatest low-literacy rates among adults." Adult education in Connecticut has demonstrated that regional entities, such as the regional education centers at EastConn in Windham County and Ed Connection in Litchfield County, can coordinate Two Gen approaches in small-town areas of high need. Also, regionalized programs such as those run by Branford, Danbury, Middletown and New London can centralize resources to reach out to towns where human services, transportation and other aids are limited.